

Close Enough to be a Shadow
John Leonard

The first story ever told
is barely a wave of sound now.
Almost perfect silence, perfectly
stretched to near immeasurability.
What was carried, sewn, spoken—
a warning, a eulogy, or a message
of hope—now exists only in parts,
whispers absorbed in bark and stone,
pieces spread apart, fragments still limping.
The story is less than bones now,
something vultures won't step near.
The story exists as dust, exists
as lichen on the ruined walls
of an ancient castle, exists as light
in places where light cannot be found.
The first story ever told is reborn
every day as a house spider,
swaying on thin wisps of space.
Just far enough away from our gaze.
Close enough to be a shadow.

John Leonard is an award-winning writer, English teacher, and poetry editor for *Twyckenham Notes*. He holds an M.A. in English from Indiana University. His previous words have appeared in *Poetry Quarterly*, *december*, *Chiron Review*, *North Dakota Review*, *Roanoke Review*, *Punt Volat*, *High Shelf Press*, *Rappahannock Review*, *Jelly Bucket*, *Mud Season Review*, *The Blue Mountain Review*, *Genre: Urban Arts*, *Stonecoast Review*, and *Trailer Park Quarterly*. He lives in Elkhart, Indiana with his wife, three cats, and two dogs. You can follow him on Twitter @jotyleon and @TwyckenhamNotes.

